



# Imperative for Action: Connecting the K-12 and Post- Secondary Systems for the Benefit of Both

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**Richard Laine**  
Director of Education  
The Wallace Foundation

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# Why do systems need to work together?

In 1990 the News of the World reported that the Chunnel project, already suffering from huge cost overruns, would face another big additional expense caused by a colossal engineering blunder.

Apparently the two halves of the tunnel, being built simultaneously from the coast of France and England, would miss each other by 14 feet.

The error was attributed to the fact that French engineers had insisted on using the metric specifications in their blueprints. The mistake would reportedly cost \$14 billion to fix.

# Priorities for K-12 & higher education exist in more challenging environment

- K-12 priority: Universal success by closing the achievement gap
- Post-secondary education priorities: Quality, access and affordability
- The challenging environment
  - Changing demographics in public schools – more poverty and more challenges facing students
  - Heightened demands for quality and accountability
  - Tough economy – fewer new dollars on the horizon

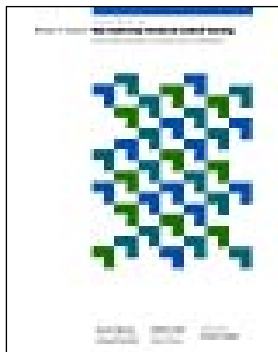
# Connections between K-12 and higher education

- At student level – The focus typically is on the quality of the high school graduates
- At the adult level – The focus is typically on teacher preparation and is only recently beginning to include leader preparation

# Leadership is key – especially where it is needed most

“...there are virtually no documented instances of troubled schools being turned around without intervention by a powerful leader.”

-- *How Leadership Influences Student Learning, 2005* and *Leadership for Learning, Leithwood, Seashore Louis & Wahlstrom, 2010*



# Leadership is key – especially in tight budgets...

Investing in the development of 100 teachers can have an impact on approximately 2,500 students

Investing in the development of half as many principals can impact 50 schools, roughly 1,000 teachers and approximately 25,000 students

And investing in the development of both teachers and leaders can help close the achievement gap

**So investing in leadership makes sense  
educationally and economically**

# Critical need to bring about change

- Principal training has been the subject of unremitting criticism for years
- Only 56% of principals surveyed by NAESP rated their graduate education as highly valuable to their success as a principal (2008)
- Wallace-funded research report by Linda Darling-Hammond and team identified characteristics of effective leader preparation programs
- Small, but growing number of leader preparation programs incorporating effective characteristics
- Wrong incentives for both the applicants and the programs

# Graduates of exemplary programs more likely to become principals

## Exemplary programs:

- 60% of the '02-'04 graduates of exemplary programs were principals by '05
- Another 20% were assistant principals

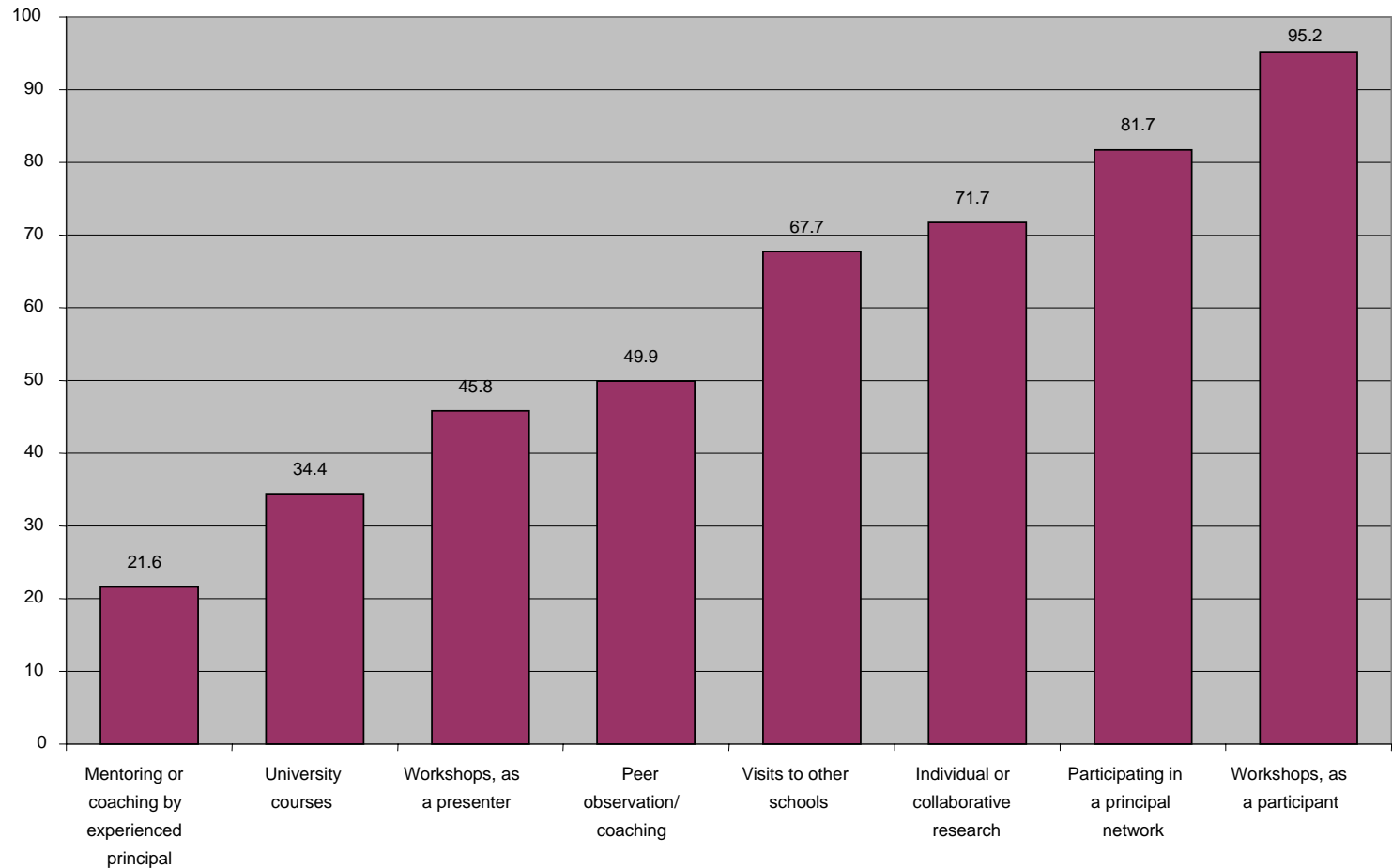
## Typical administrator preparation programs:

- 20-30% of graduates become principals within a few years
- fewer than half ever enter any administrative position



# What principals typically experience

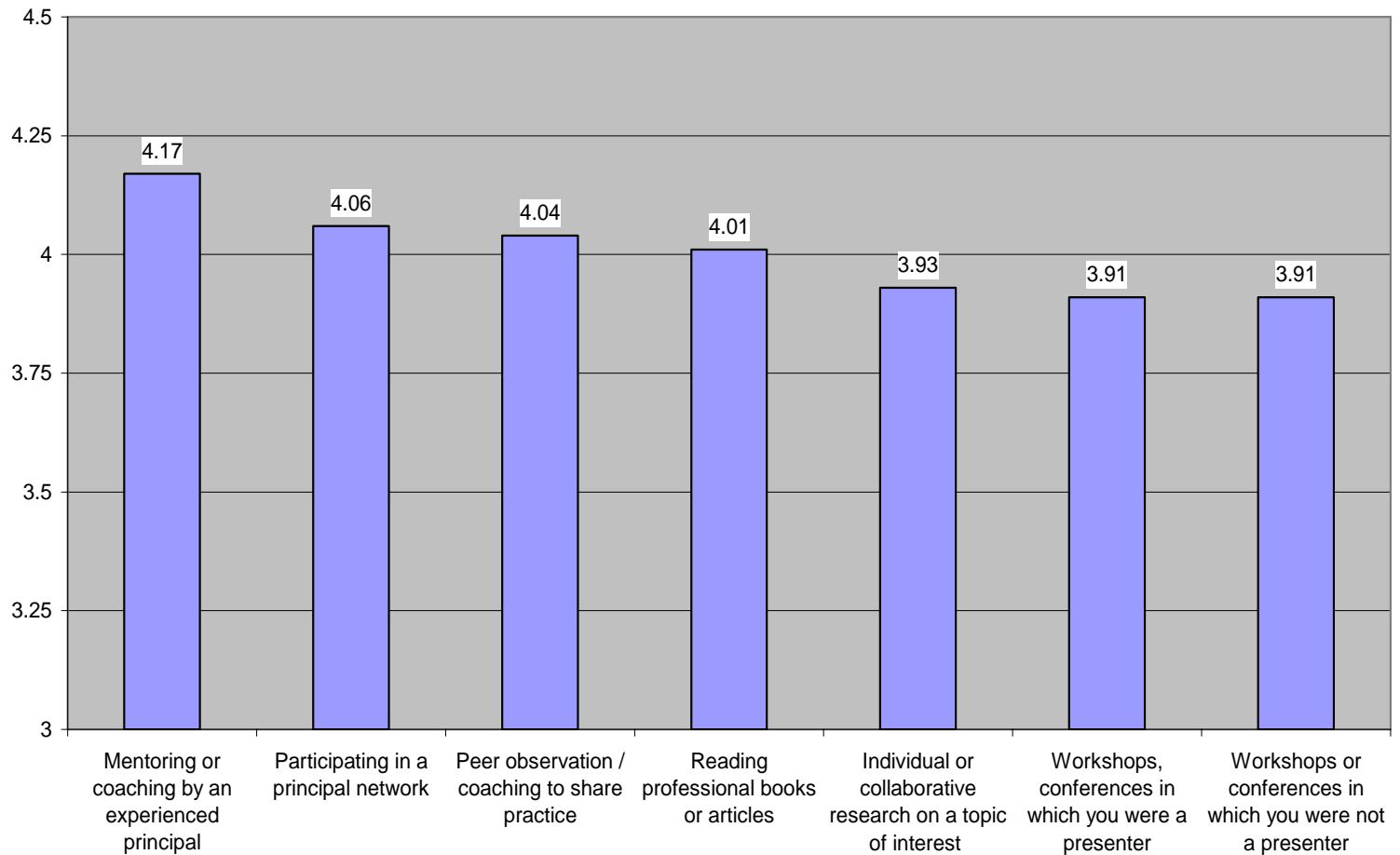
Figure 1 - Principals' Access to Professional Development in Last 12 Months  
(% of Principals Participating )



Source: *Preparing School Leaders for a Changing World: Lessons from Exemplary Leadership Development Programs, 2007*, Darling-Hammond et al.

# What principals actually value

**Figure 2 - Principals' Views of the Helpfulness of Professional Development**  
(1= Not at all Helpful; 5= Very Helpful)



# Policy levers to improve leadership

- **Standards, data & accountability policy levers**
  - Leader standards – focused on right things?
  - Certification – who grants it?
  - Accreditation and program review – what is quality?
  - Assessment for initial license and/or renewal
  - Collect & use the right actionable data

# Policy levers – Cont'd

## ➤ **Financial levers and incentives**

- Target resources to support aspiring leaders
- Modify funding allocation formulas for SIG dollars and other federal programs
- Explore differentiating incentives of teachers wanting to move up the salary guide from aspiring leaders
- Explore aligning incentives of preparation programs and faculty across university with needs of public schools

# Policy levers – Cont'd

## ➤ **Continuing education policy levers**

- Increase access to induction/mentoring programs
- Increase likelihood that continuing ed requirements met by high quality professional development
- Consider regional leadership academies
- Explore the development of teacher leader programs to build pipeline for school leaders and new revenue source for higher education

**As you utilize state policy levers, it is important to align state action with district policy and practice to have the greatest impact on schools...[RAND]**

# Barriers to change...

## ➤ **Lack of knowledge**

- Limited understanding of the need for change
- Unsure of what to do

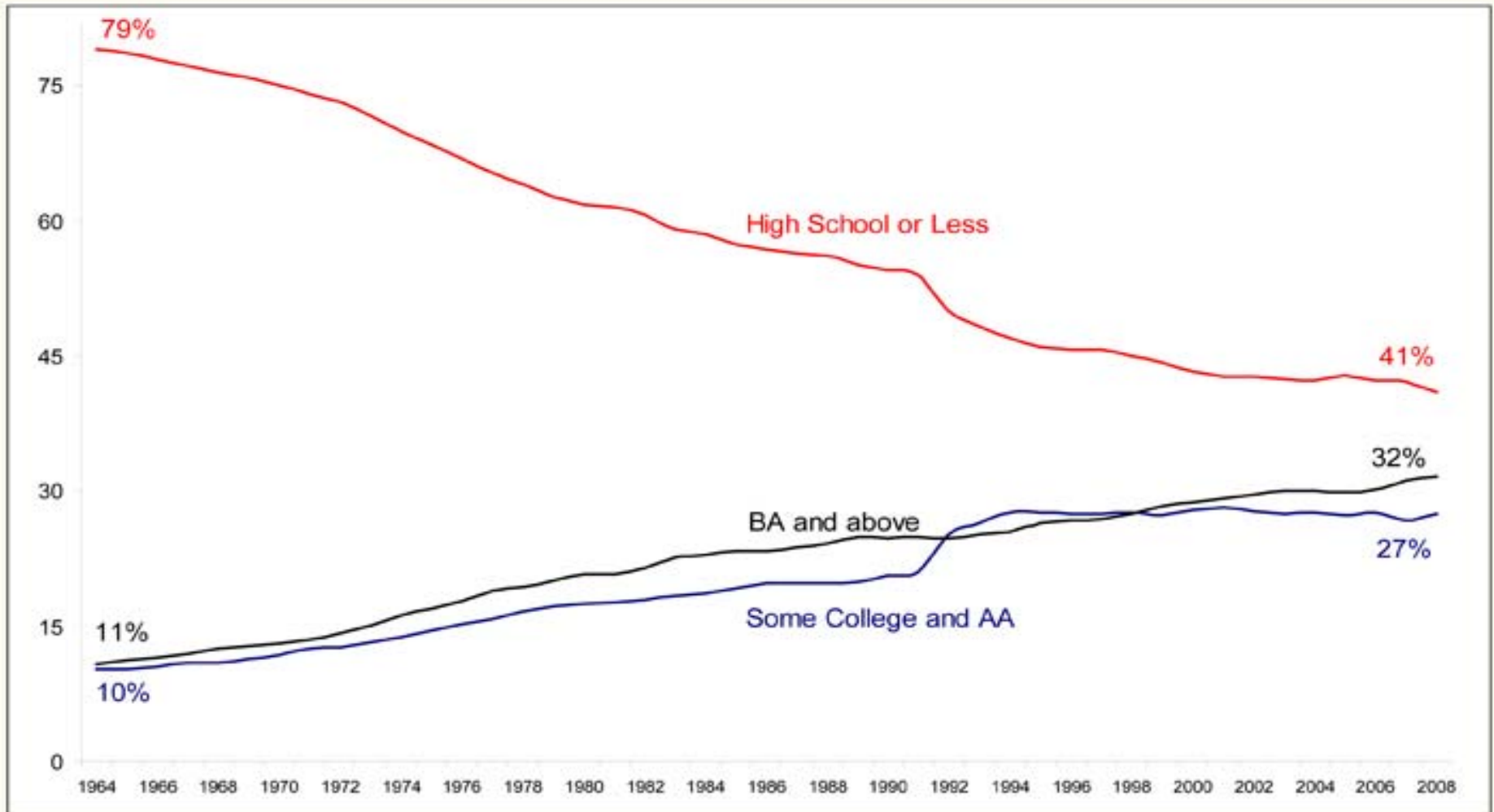
## ➤ **Lack of motivation**

- Strong incentives to maintain the status quo
- Lack of political will to change
- Opposing agendas

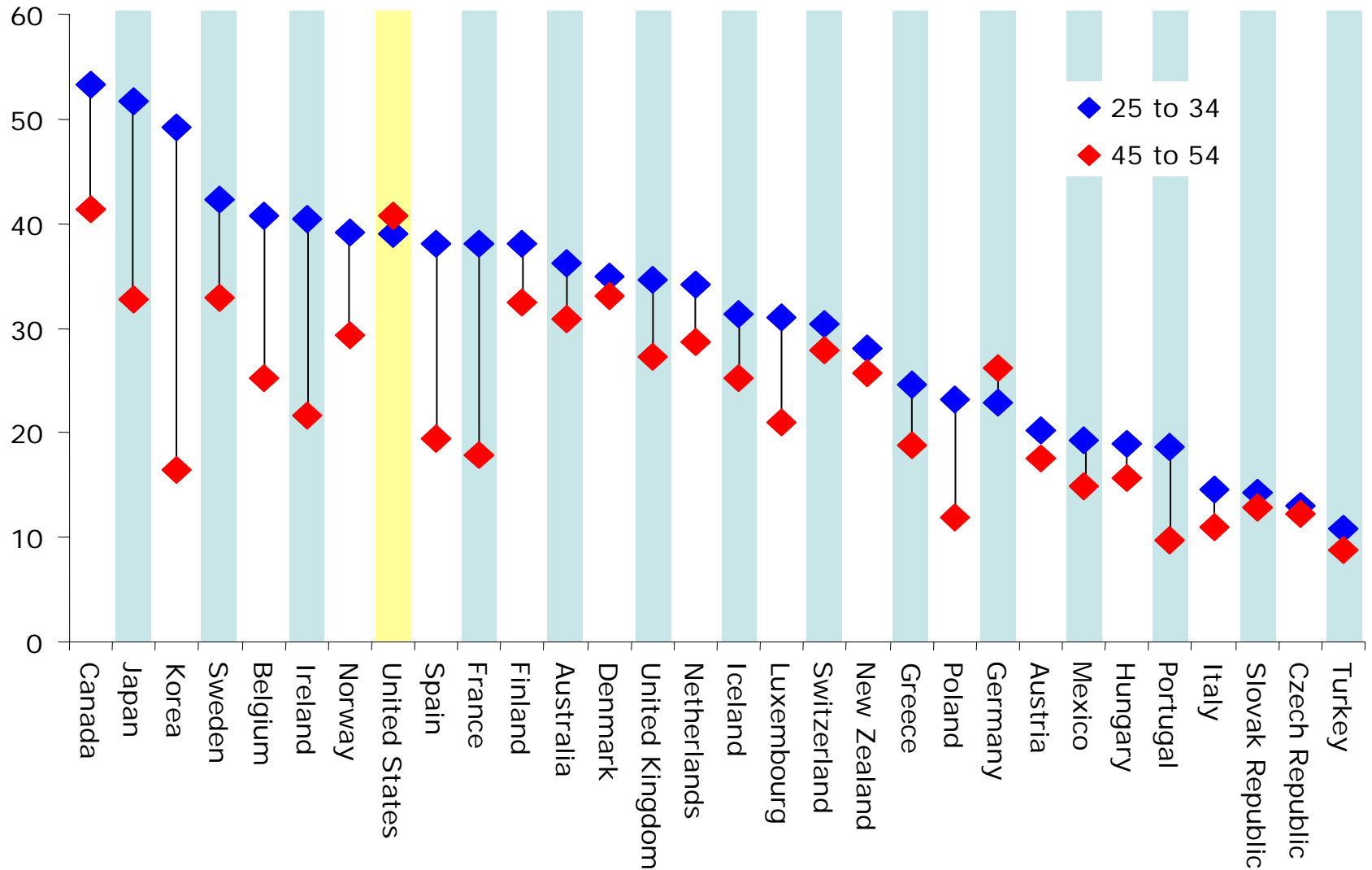
## ➤ **Lack of organizational capacity**

- Competing priorities
- Staff unprepared to change – lack of relevant skills
- Lack of productive partnerships to set policies and implement effectively

# Growing need for more schooling – education requirement for a changing economy



# Who is to blame for lack of US progress in college attainment (AA and up)?



Source: Organisation of Economic Cooperation and Development, *Education at a Glance 2006* (2004 data)



# Taking action: questions to consider

- What key policy levers have you used to improve leadership and other reforms?
- What is in the way of using the policy levers to achieve your reform goals?
- Does your organization have the authority, power and/or influence to bring about the needed changes? If not, what partners do you need?

“Don’t be afraid to take a big step when one is indicated. You can’t cross a chasm in two small steps.”

David Lloyd George, Prime Minister, England, 1916 – 1922